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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001468

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SY](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: MCNS ON MAY 4 REVIEWS BASRA SITUATION, BORDER  
ENFORCEMENT FUNDING, FMS, AND IRAN SPECIAL GROUPS LINKS

REF: BAGHDAD 01381

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[11](#). (S REL AS UK) SUMMARY: Prime Minister Maliki chaired the May 4 Ministerial Committee on National Security (MCNS) that reviewed the Basrah situation, resources for MOI's Directorate of Border Enforcement (DBE), equipping and training MOD and MOI through Foreign Military Sales (FMS), and a National Joint Intelligence Analysis Center (NJIAC) assessment of Iranian influence on the Special Groups. Several committee members underlined the urgency of expending humanitarian and development funds in Basrah to sustain popular enthusiasm for the GOI's action. MNF-I Commanding General David Petraeus reminded the committee that deliveries of equipment purchased for the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program would stop in August because additional purchases had not been made. The PM instructed National Security Advisor (NSA) Rubaie to expand the NJIAC Special Groups assessment and address support from Syria, Lebanese Hezbollah, and former Ba'athists. The PM requested an Iraqi only session with his intelligence services to review the evidence. End Summary.

Maintaining Momentum in Basrah  
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[12](#). (S REL AS UK) Minister of State for National Security (MSNS) Shirwan al-Waeli gave a brief update on the situation in Basrah. (The PM instructed him to defer the update on Mosul/Ninewa to the May 5 Crisis Action Cell (CAC) meeting.) Waeli cited a reduction in criminal violence, a drop in the number of assassinations, and continued discovery of weapons caches as evidence of the success of the Charge of the Knights (CK) operation in Basrah. Waeli observed that while fake (i.e. militia) checkpoints and threats against oil infrastructure remain, operations in Basrah had borne good fruit.

[13](#). (S REL AS UK) General Petraeus applauded the CK operation and encouraged additional clearing operations going back into previously cleared neighborhoods, noting that the recent deliberate clearing operations had discovered some significant caches and sophisticated weapons. He emphasized the need for urgent action to provide services to the people of Basrah - the quality of life must improve lest the GOI lose the support of the people and local leaders. He suggested that some of the funds already made available for humanitarian and development projects be given to the Iraqi Army commanders on the ground in Basrah to use to hire local citizens to begin clean-up, repair, and reconstruction efforts, thereby providing jobs and getting money into the hands of local community members.

[14](#). (S REL AS UK) National Security Advisor (NSA) Dr. Mowaffaq Rubaie echoed General Petraeus' comments and noted that the PM had created a committee composed of the MOD, MOI, Finance, and others to fund projects. Some of the funds should be

used to hire up to ten thousands into the MOI or MOD, while another fifteen thousand could be given temporary jobs cleaning up the city. He indicated that it might require another three weeks to get projects operating and that only 25 million USD of a projected 100 million USD allocation for Basrah had been received. Maliki directed that the additional money be transferred immediately and to get people working.

#### Request for Additional DBE Resources

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15. (S REL AS UK) MOI Bolani presented the general goals for enhancing security on the border and preventing infiltration, then asked the MCNS to endorse DBE's request for an additional USD 216 million. The PM asked for objections. While there were no objections, MSNS Waeli and others noted ongoing difficulties with release to line ministries of budget allocations from the Ministry of Finance. The PM and Deputy PM Barham Saleh underlined the importance of budget execution, not just allocation. The PM insisted that a modern, functioning police force with communications and border monitoring equipment needed to be in place. Saleh reminded the MOI to present their requests, reiterating the need to execute the funds allocated.

#### Breaking the Logjam on Equipping ISF

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17. (S REL AS UK) General Petraeus noted that there were a number of issues with FMS purchases. He stated that all of the equipment that had been ordered was coming and should

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arrive over the next few months. However, due to GOI failures to execute the necessary purchases through FMS, the deliveries of necessary equipment would stop after August. He reminded the committee that the purchases planned by the MOD and MOI reflected the goals for equipment and training that the GOI had set. In the general discussion that ensued, MOI noted again those funds were being held by the Ministry of Finance. The MOD Secretary General said that requests were ready to move forward and that the MOD would sign the FMS cases. MNSTC-I Commander LTG Dubik informed the committee that a previous bureaucratic dispute with MoF on the disposition of invoice originals had been resolved. The MCNS undertook to instruct MoF to move forward with the release of funds for FMS purchases for equipment for both MOI and MOD.

#### Intel Assessment of Iranian Support to Special Groups

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18. (S REL AS UK) NSA Rubaie presented an intelligence estimate by the NJIAC on the Special Groups. The key conclusions were that the Special Groups get their support from Iran and were working an Iranian agenda, seek to undermine the GOI, and desire to make the American efforts in Iraq fail. He noted that the Special Groups operate under the cover of the Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM), but can be clearly differentiated from JAM, the Sadr Trend, and the Office of the Martyr Sadr. Rubaie said that Iran is attempting to develop in Iraq something similar to Hezbollah in Lebanon: a parallel state within a state.

19. (S REL AS UK) Noting that he was presenting only a "summary of a summary", Rubaie added that cutting off funds to Special Groups was essential. He also said that Iran was training Special Group members near Isfahan. General Petraeus noted that the consensus was that arms came from Syria for the Special Groups via connections to Lebanese Hezbollah. The PM called for an Iraqi-only session focused on intelligence about the Special Groups. He also noted the need to analyze the efforts of other groups, acknowledging Rubaie's point that this report was only about Special Groups. MOI Bolani stressed the need for consensus on an

approach, noting that Special Groups seek to stir up sectarian violence. Foreign Minister Zebari called for more information, particularly about the role of Syria. He also underlined the support the Quds Force gives to Special Groups. MSNS Wa'eli noted that members of Special Groups may be infiltrating political parties. Deputy PM Barham Saleh wrapped up the discussion with a call for further development of the report. He characterized it as a good initial effort but needing to be enriched. The report would inform a Working Group that should be formed to advise the PM on an Iran Policy. Rubaie agreed to re-work the report and address support from Syria, Lebanese Hezbollah, and former Ba'athists as well as from Iran, taking into account the comments of the MCNS members.

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